

# The Jesuit Government in Paraguay

TRANSLATED BY BRUCE DIRECTOR

[*This sketch first appeared in the October 1788 volume of Wieland's German Mercury. Schiller's principal source for this devastating exposé was Christoph Harenberg's Pragmatic History of the Jesuit Order, (Halle/Helmstedt 1760).*]

In a campaign which preceded the battle of Paraguay, fought on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1759, between the Jesuits and the united Spanish-Portuguese army, two Europeans, who had fought with desperate bravery, were brought in among the different Indian prisoners. Both were dressed entirely differently than the rest of the prisoners. They wore a red Hussar's habit, on which two small sleeves hung down from the shoulder. Their helmet was trimmed with red feathers and both wore a large chain of diamonds around their necks.

Just as richly adorned were their horses. Their weapons were a large saber and a flint rifle; when they were undressed, one found a very good breastplate on their bodies, and a small pistol and two daggers as well.

The Indians who were captured with them, fell when they set eyes upon them, reverently went down on their knees before them, and struck themselves on their breast, whereby they repeatedly pronounced the word "Kau." One of the Europeans appeared to accept this homage with annoyance; the Indians around him, however, did not let that disturb them.

Not a single word could be brought out of him. They hit him, they brought him to be tortured; a few involuntary sounds in the Portuguese language, which pain squeezed out of him, were all that they received from him. The other showed himself more open and free, and soon confessed, that he was a Jesuit. He had, said he, accompanied his Indians around as their chaplain and spiritual assistant in the battle,

as he pretended, to keep their excessive fury within bounds, and to implant in them a gentle way of thinking toward the enemy. Finally, he revealed his name was Pater Rennez, and the other, whom the example of his comrade made likewise more talkative, at this point also confessed, that he was a Jesuit and a chaplain of the Indians, and his name was Pater Lenaumez.

When their pockets were searched, a small book was found, at whose discovery they became extremely restless. It was written in an unknown code; on the edge, however, a key in the Latin language was attached thereto. This document contained a law of war of the Indians, or rather the chief tenets of the religion, which the Order had sought to implant in their Indian subjects. I relate them here, because they may interest the curious and, perhaps, give some information about the Jesuit government in Paraguay.

Hear, O man! The commands of God and of the holy Michael:

1. God is the ultimate purpose of all action.
2. God is the source of all bravery and strength.
3. Bravery is a virtue as well of the body as of the soul.
4. God does nothing in vain.
5. Bravery is given to Man, so that he may defend himself.
6. Man must defend himself against his enemies.
7. The enemies are the white men, who come from a far distant region, to conduct war, and are cursed by God.
8. The Europeans, i.e. the Spanish and Portuguese, are such people who are cursed by God.
9. God's enemies cannot be our friends.
10. God commands, that we exterminate his enemies and go forth to their country, to exterminate them.

11. In order that one cursed by God, for example a Spaniard, be destroyed, one must also lose one's temporal life, in order to serve the eternal.
12. Whoever speaks with a European or understands their language, shall be condemned to the infernal fire.
13. Whoever kills a European, will become blessed.
14. Whoever closes a day without having performed a deed of hatred and cursing against a European shall be condemned to the eternal fire.
15. God permits him, who despises temporal goods and is always ready to fight against the friends of the devil, to do everything with a woman.
16. Whoever perishes in an encounter with the Europeans, shall be blessed.
17. Whoever discharges a cannon against the enemies of God, shall be blessed, and all sins of his life be forgiven him.
18. Whoever, at great danger of death, be the cause, of reconquest of a castle and a fortress, which is thus possessed illegitimately, he shall have, from among all the women of the heavens, a very beautiful wife in Paradise.
19. Whoever be the cause, that our empire extend beyond its borders, he shall have four very beautiful wives among all God's daughters.
20. Whoever be the cause, that our weapons extend to Europe, he shall have many beautiful maidens in Paradise.
21. Whoever is devoted to the fruit of the earth, he shall enjoy no fruit of the heavens.
22. Whoever fathers more children, he will have more glory in heaven.

23. Whoever drinks wine, he will not come into heaven's kingdom.
24. Whoever does not obey his Kau and is not humble, shall come into Hell.
25. The Kau are the sons of God, who come out of the heavens over Europe, that they help the people against the enemies of God.
26. The Kau are the angels of God, who descend to the people, to teach them how one comes into heaven, and the art to destroy the enemy of God.
27. One must give to the Kaus all fruits of the land and all labor of mankind, so that they make use of the same, to destroy the people who are the friends of the devil.
28. Whoever dies in disgrace of his Kau, shall not be blessed.
29. Whoever touches the highest Kau, will be blessed.
30. Every man be subservient to his Kau, and go wherever he tells him to go, and give him what he demands, and do what he commands.
31. Men are in the world to fight with the devil and his friends, so that they come into heaven's kingdom, where joy and pleasure are eternal, which no man's heart can grasp.